N.w.China AF13
Tu ren

yüan bu. A single day's horseback ride took me there. (1) 361

1. Prschewalski's Yjam bu. In Prschewalski, Reisen in Tibet, translated by Stein, the Tu ren which I am about to describe are spoken of as Daldy, Doldy and Tunschen, and Prschewalski believes they originated in Samarkand and are a mixture of the Aryan and Mongolian race.

This Wei yüan bu is a little market town, ninety lis distant from 361
the city of Hsining fu toward the north-northeast, and is geologically 133
in the same red tertiary clay basin as the prefecture city of Hsining and the monastery Gum bum. The edge of the basin is about 10 kilometers beyond on the north and east and it is only there that one again finds granite and slate looming up out of the loess-covered tertiary. Thus, from north to south the width of the red clay of the Hsining fu basin is 50-60 kilometers. In modern times these red strata were split up into so many valleys and ravines that even this tertiary region has now become a bizarre mountain country. The material is so soft that the valley bottoms of the larger streams have been washed out to form wide beds. At the spot where Wei yüan bu is situated a large plain several square kilometers in size has been formed by the union of two such broad-bottomed, fruitful valleys. This undoubtedly accounts for the location and the importance of the place.

For, Wei yüan bu is an important town. It can even be called 361
a small city. It has a civil official who is now under the hsien of [624]
Hsining, it is the seat of a captain and second lieutenant, it has a city wall, a full half-dozen pawn shops, and all kinds of craftsmen. Above all there are important whiskey distillers among its inhabit- [274]
ants, who export their product as far as Lanchow and far into Tibet, and /246/ many mill owners whose mills, like those throughout East Tibet, are characterized by vertical axle trees and horizontally placed paddle wheels. In the census of 1895 the town had 820 fami- [162]
lies. For me Wei yüan bu was important as the present-day chief [443]
town and market-place of the Tu ren who are under the administration of the hsien of Hsining.

Tu ren (tu jen) literally means "earth man." It is a Chinese 563
word and means "a resident." It refers to those people who were 167
already in the country before the last Chinese inundation. This last large immigration of Chinese began in the Mongol Dynasty [1260-1368] and still continues.